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SECTION VI.

MISCELLANEOUS.

TERMINOLOGY.

337 The Khasis, like the Aliases of Peru in Catullus, seem to be somewhat reluctant to utter the names of their own immediate relations, and of other people's also. Parents are very frequently called the mother of so and so (the child's name being mentioned), or the father of so and so; cf. *Ka kni ka Miei, U kpa u Philip*. The actual names of the parents, after falling into disuse, are often entirely forgotten. The origin of the practice may be that the Khasis, like the Aliases, were reluctant to mention their parents by name for fear of attracting the notice of evil spirits. The practice of teknonymy, however, is not confined to the Khasis or the Aliases of Celebes (see footnote to page 312 of the "Golden Bough"). The custom is also believed to have been prevalent to some extent not long ago in some parts of Ireland.

777 179 551 The advent of the Welsh Missionaries and the partial introduction of English education has in some cases produced rather peculiar names. I quote some instances:—

U Watee Kingdom, Ka Mediterranean Sea, Ka Red Sea; U Shakespeare Rowan, U Overland, Ka Trinidad, Ka Medina, Ka Mary Rowan, U Mission, and Ka India.

KHASI METHOD OF CALCULATING TIME.

345 The Khasis adopt the lunar month, *u kynai*, twelve of which go to the year *ka snem*. They have no system of reckoning cycles, as is the custom with some of the Shan tribes. The following are the names of the months:—

1905 *U Lyllo-lyngkat*, corresponding to January. This month is 174. the Khasi Hills is the coldest in the year. The Khasis have

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(*lyllo*) the fire-brand (*iyngkot*) in order to keep themselves warm in this month, hence its name *lyllo-kyngkot*.

U Kynghang, the windy month, corresponding with February.

U Lyjon, March. In this month the hills are again clothed with verdure, and the grass sprouts up (*lyjon*), hence the name of the month, a *Lyjon*.

U Iaiong, April. This name may possibly be a corruption of a *kynsi-iong*, i.e. the black worm, the characteristic weather month.

U Jymmong, May. This is the month when the plant called by the Khasis *ai'iew jymmong*, or snake-plant, blooms, hence the name.

U Jyllien. The dry rainy month, the word *jyllien* meaning damp. This corresponds to June.

U nakhieng. The evil-smelling month, when the vegetation rots owing to excessive moisture. This corresponds with July.

U'waidur. The month when the weather is supposed to become clear, *synder*, and when the plant called *ja'wadur* blooms. This is August.

U'wai-lar. September. The month for weeding the ground.

U Ri-aiw. The month when the Autumn rats first appear, literally, when the country, *ri*, becomes red, *aiw*. This is October.

U'wai niang. The month when cultivators dry the produce of their fields in *niang* or earthen pots, corresponding with November.

U Bah-prah. The month when the *prah* or baskets for carrying the crops are put away (*bah sah*). Another interpretation given by Rigge is "the month of the fall of the leaf." December.

The Khasi week has the peculiarity that it almost universally consists of eight days. The reason of the eight-day week is because the markets are usually held every eighth day. The names of the days of the week are not those of planets, but of places where the principal markets are held, or used to be held, in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills. The following are the names of the days of the week and of the principal markets in the district :—

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Khasi Name	Jaintia Name
1. Lyndoh (Serpent or Elsewhere)	Kyllon (Nothing)
2. Kyndiem	Pyndiang
3. Umlong (Marking the Set or Letter)	Mudong (Marking)
4. Synshar (Not left or Chorus) (Marriage to Mylliem) (Usage to Kingdom)	Syndong (Song)
5. Nailing (Letting-Out)	Nandai (Hanging)
6. Pnoah or Pyrnah (Marriage, small market)	Pyrkah (River)
7. Umiah	Dyrsa Hain
8. Umiah (Marriage, large market)	Kyrkat (Passenger)

In the Khasi country, markets are usually held every fourth day, e.g. at Nongpoh, Mawkyrwat, Pynthor, and Shella. At Therria the market is held every Friday, and at Nongpoh, or Bholaguri, every Tuesday.

THE LYNGAMS.

Although mention has been made incidentally in various parts of this monograph of Lyngam customs, it has been thought necessary to give the Lyngams a separate chapter, as these people differ in very greatly from the Khasis in their manner of life, and in their customs. *Lyngam* is the Khasi name; the Garo name for the Lyngams is *Migam*. There are several Migam villages in the north-eastern corner of the Garo Hills district, and there is no clear communication kept up between these villages and the Lyngams inhabitants of the Khasi Hills district. The Lyngams must not be confused with the *Hissi* or *Nandwojia* Garos who inhabit the low hills to the north of the Khasi Hills district, and are called by the Khasis *Dkis*. All Lyngams claim to be Khasis, they dislike being called Garos; but although it is true they speak what may be called a dialect of Khasi, and observe some of the Khasi customs, the Lyngams are more Garo than Khasi. Before proceeding further it should be stated that the Jowaees of Boko call the Lyngams *Nimjal* Garos, all hill people being Garos to the Jowaees of that region, without distinction

643 food provisions which they have brought to sell. They sit close to each other and form long lines which double or treble when the market is heavily attended. There is little room for the visitors to the market, who must work their way through the rows that are spread out and through the women sellers who are sitting so close together. A woman seldom sits off to one side. Since there is no stealing at the market, sitting apart is also unnecessary, although a better view of the wares that are laid out for sale would be obtained.

The large objects, such as bamboo and beer, are always set up on the outer side of the market and sold there even when the selling is managed by women (which is an exception).

643 • for a) Selecting the Time. 1. Choosing the market day. The Ehoni have a week that is eight or four days long. Every eight (5) days

1. P.J. Stagmüller, "Pflanzungsbau und Jagdgerätkunde der Ehoni" [Cultivation, Hunting and Hunting Customs of the Ehoni]. Anthropos, 1925, 20. 413 ff.

there is a large market and every fourth day there is a small market, always at the same place. The large and the small markets are also held daily, but at different places in a certain district. In this district or defined area the market days for the various villages are so determined that they never coincide with each other, and each Ehoni can attend this market or that one as he wishes. The sequence of the markets is regulated so precisely that every Ehoni knows exactly where a market is being held at the moment. The days are also named from the markets that are to be held. They do not say: "Sunday or a Wednesday, but of the

...ng dak (large market) in Shillong, in Nongkrem, in Mawlai, in Sohpetbneng, in Pomtiah, in Laitkor, etc. Thus each day is precisely established, and at the same time the market for the place concerned.

In the territory of the War the markets are held every fourth day in the following order: in Nongkrem, in Mawlong, in Tyllay and in Shella. Here the week days are either named according to the market days or they say: the day before the market day, the market day, the day after the market day and the day between the markets. Every Khasi in this district knows then without any doubt which day is meant.

2. Determining the time of day. As concerns the time of day during which the markets are held, no generally valid rule can be set up. This varies according to the individual places. In general from noon until late in the afternoon is the time for the chief market. The market places are usually still empty before 11 o'clock in the morning. The end is about 5 o'clock in the afternoon, if not earlier.

The duration of the markets results from what has been already said. In general (?) the duration of a large market is about six hours, while a small market lasts only about four hours.

3) Order at the Market or Market Peace. Although there are no guards or other agents of order on duty at the Khasi markets, the great peace and order at even the largest Khasi markets cause great pleasure to everyone. I have never heard any complaint of foodstuffs or other objects for sale being stolen. The Khasi considers the market as something holy, as something to be respected, as something that belongs to everybody, which nobody can claim for his own. Attacks on a person's life also do not occur.

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No. 4.—1904.

(1) Note on the Khasis, Syntengs, and allied Tribes, inhabiting the Khasi and Jaintia Hills District in Assam.—By Major P. R. T. Gurdon, Superintendent of Ethnography in Assam. (With plates III—IV).

[Read 1st August, 1904.]

I. *Physical characteristics.*—The men are seldom tall; they are generally well made, and possess great strength of limb,—of leg in particular. Their features show a resemblance to those of the Japanese; their complexions are fair, some few, like Shih, and quite very frequently obliquely set. The women are good-looking, of a known type, and are cheerful and pleasant-mannered. Children are sometimes exceedingly pretty. Khasis are inveterate chewers of pán,—both men, women, and children; the Kintavons have given to pán being removed by the number of betel-nuts that can be chewed on the journey. The hair of the males is shaved above the forehead pretty high up, and the remainder is gathered into a knot at the back of the head. Very few Khasis have much hair about the face. Both Khasis and Syntengs wear the chawkata coat (jymphong) hide-cloth, jute string (a kind of

713 chayed, the country houses free of the Thlen: but one small piece remained which no one would eat, and from this sprang a multitude of Thlens, which infest the environs of Cherra and its neighbourhood. When a Thlen takes up its abode in a family there is no means of getting rid of it, though it occasionally leaves of its own accord, and often follows property of the family when given away or sold. The Thlen attaches itself to wealth, and brings prosperity and wealth to the family, but on the condition that it is supplied with blood. Its craving comes on at uncertain intervals: and manifests itself by sickness among the family, by misadventure, or increasing poverty. It can only be appeased by the murder of a human being. The murderer takes the hair, the tips of the fingers, and a little blood from the navel, ranges it in a bamboo tube, and offers them to the Thlen. The belief is that the demon then appears in the form of a snake and devours the body of the murdered person, which is unrecognized from the portions thus offered. After this, the craving is satisfied for a time, and the efforts of that house prosper. Many families in these hills are known or suspected to be Ri-thlen, or keepers of a Thlen, and are dreaded and avoided in consequence. Whenever a dead body is found with the marks above described on it (and particularly if it is with no wound, and death has been caused by twisting the neck), it may be pronounced with almost absolute certainty that the object of the murder was to appease a Thlen."

[19] It may be stated that, so far as I am aware to date, this superstition is peculiar to the Khasi and Jaintia Hills, and it is not to be met with amongst any of the other hill-tribes of the province. It would be specially interesting to learn whether there are any traces of a similar superstition amongst any of the tribes of Burma and Further India. The Thlen-superstition is probably of a very ancient origin. It may be well to take the place amongst the Khasis of the head-hunting custom amongst the Nagas. The Thlen superstition is still deposited amongst the people here, in many portions of the country the Khasis being afraid to walk out after dark for fear of being attacked by cannibals, or persons who are searching for victims to sacrifice to the Thlen.

● 694 12. *Calculation of time.*—The Khasis adopt the lunar month. The names of the lunar months here have been extracted from Colonel Rivet's report below. I am not certain whether all Colonel Rivet's explanations of meanings of the names of the months are correct:—

1 *Kylai-lyndi*—the seed-burning moon, corresponding with January.

2 *Synreng*—the study moon, corresponding with February.

3 *Lber*—the seed-sowing moon, corresponding with March.

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U *Iaing*,—the cloudy thunderbolt-weather moon, corresponding with *April*. 305

U *Iaw-mooj*,—the flowering moon, corresponding with *May*.

U *Nóh*,—the *long*-water moon, corresponding with *June*.

U *Naitung*,—the leaf-smelling moon, corresponding with *July*.

U *Nailar*,—the moon when a plant called the *Jutalar*, which has a red flower flourishes. This is perhaps one of the crotons. The plant is commonly known as the snake plant.

U *Nailar*,—the moon for ploughing, corresponding with *September*. This may be also the month for courting, the word *lar* also having the meaning to woo.

U *Kyr-mar*,—the moon when nature fades (usually becomes red) corresponding with *October*.

U *Naiaing*,—the mother-pot moon, corresponding with *November*.

U *Nakpreh*,—the moon of the fall of the leaf, corresponding with *December*.

The Khasi week consists generally of eight days, although in some of the War-Hynnie on the southern side of the hills there is a week of four days only. The days of the week are named after the markets which are held in rotation on the different days.

Khasi.	System.
1. Lyndait.	Ky-lum.
2. Ronghrem.	Pyn-shing.
3. Tre-lang.	Mon-long.
4. Sang-lup.	Tmo-shing.
5. Shillong.	Mawlai.
6. Pyrnai.	Pyrdah.
7. Iawsih.	Thyrn-khiah.
8. Iawdoh.	Ka-lait.

58. *Nicknames.*—One more interesting custom that may be noticed in the Khasi and System custom of nicknaming, or of parents taking the names of their children, e.g., in Khasi Ka Nari (the mother of Ka Nari), U Kpa Nikor (the father of Nikor). The taking of names thus is almost universally practised. The actual names of the parents after taking into households are often completely forgotten by the villagers. Only the names of the children are used coupled with "father of" "mother of" as explained above. The advent of the Welsh Missionaries and the partial domestication of English education has, in some cases, produced some rather peculiar names. I quote some instances:—U Water English, Ka Mediterranean Iaw, Ka Bird Iaw, U Shakespeare Shoon, U Overland, Ka Briadlad. [307]

16: McCormack E-4,5 (1956-1958) 1964
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clothes, but Christian influence has eradicated or driven underground the consumption by women and children. Industrial arts. The only industrial arts traditionally practiced in all households were a rudimentary carpentry and a simple utilitarian basketry. Other arts were few, and were practiced in village specialties: the washing and smelting of iron ore and the forging of bars, axes, knives, swords, and cooking pots (upland Khasi); the spinning of cotton thread (Nongkhlaw village, Jaintia); the dyeing of cotton thread and the weaving of cloth (Jaintia Hills, Lyngngam, West); the spinning and weaving of Eri silk (Khyrwang and Nongpoh villages, Khasi and Jaintia); and the hand manufacture, without wheel, of pointed earthenware pots (Lamin village, Jaintia). Interworking and the production of cotton goods have nearly died out through the competition of machine-made goods. Carpentry has greatly improved; its innovation of major importance is the sewing and tailoring, on sewing machines, of ready-made garments for both sexes. Cf. Dutch 1908; C. W. 1932. Trade. Khasi villages normally contain a number of household shops operated by women. Every Khasi also lives within walking distance of several village markets that are held on successive days of the eight-day week. The limits of market attendance for the members of any particular village can be roughly distinguished by their naming the days of their week, which are called after the active markets. The exception is the huge market at Shillong, much of which is active daily, and which serves as a magnet for Khasi from all over the hills. The traditional barter has given way to currency in all markets. The small ones contain at least some local farm produce, plus other essentials like betel nut, and the food and tea stalls which serve as centers of social intercourse. The big markets contain not only regional products and manufactures but also products from distant parts of the hills, brought for sale by traveling middlemen. There is also substantial trade from the hills to the valleys, as potatoes, pears, betles, tea, cotton, cured bones, the wood of the sal tree, Eri silk thread, limestone, coal, ivory, betel leaf, betel nut, pan leaves, bamboo, sugar cane, oranges, oil, tobacco, and chillies. From the plains to the hills, there is trade in dried fish, paddy, rice, salt, cooking oil, kerosene, matches, tea, sugar, wheat flour, machine-made cloth, shawls, metal pots, crockery, porcelain objects, coral beads, silver, and gold. Markets are important not only as economic institutions but also as centers for recreation (including archery competitions), courtship, affirmation of kinship ties with distant relatives, and the dissemination of information of all kinds. Cf. Dasgupta 1936; Divisions of labor. Men do the heavy work, such as clearing and burning the swidden fields, caring for cattle and goats and driving them to market, butchering and selling large cuts of beef and pork, carpentry and mining, and driving and blowing on motor vehicles. They also help women

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(839)
(844)

54 [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

or the rate of two or three seers for a farthing; and sugar-cane, the cultivation of which is also very limited, at from a little over a farthing to three farthings per cane. A fermented liquor called *kadaw*, made from rice, is sold at from three farthings to threepence a quart, according to strength; and a distilled spirit called *pāsāiñ*, or *kaliad kiwoll*, at from threepence to fourpence halfpenny a quart. This latter description of liquor is sometimes made very strong. Six months ruin by which the present prices of the above articles can be compared with the rates ruling ten years ago. The maximum price of rice during the famine of 1896-97 was 5 seers 6 chhatāks for the rupee, or about £2 a hundredweight.

Measures, Weights, etc.—The Khāsi people have no proper measurement of time or distance. If there be any standard for measuring distance, it is by the number of pāns a man chews in the course of a journey, generally about one every half hour. In some parts of the Jāintia land is measured by a stick called *ka shong-ong*, varying in length from six to seven cubits. Liquids are measured in gourds of different measures, varying from half a *chhatāk* to a seer, and also in bamboo tubes. Rice, potatoes, beans, etc. are measured in baskets, varying in size in different markets from two to eighty pounds.

In the Khāsi Hills the inhabitants reckon eight days to the week, named as follows:—(1) Lynduh; (2) Shong-kwan; (3) Tiar-kong; (4) Kong-kay; (5) Shillong; (6) Pom-lih; (7) Tiar-lih; (8) Tom-mah. In the Jāintia Hills the eight days are named thus:—(1) Kyllon; (2) Pyn-eing; (3) Sūkr-long; (4) Sūkr-eing; (5) Sūkr-thot; (6) Pyn-thot; (7) Thyn-niem; (8) Kyllon. The Khāsi months of the year, calculated by moons, are as follow:—(1) U Kyllā Iyndoh; (2) U Ryn-pang; (3) U Lyber; (4) U Laiong; (5) U Jiewmong; (6) U Jūlie; (7) U Nai-ong; (8) U Nai-kor; (9) U Nai-dor; (10) U Kyrem; (11) U Nai-ong; (12) U Nai-pnāi.

Labour.—Labourers.—There is, and always has been, a large class of labourers in the District who neither own nor possess any land. Women and children are employed to transport and carry loads of all kinds.

Tenures.—Land Tenures can hardly be said to exist. There is nothing whatever resembling the relations between landlord and tenant throughout the Khāsi Hills. The lands as a rule are either communal property or belong to village communities, and are cultivated under customs but not enforceable agreements. Of the rule